

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1. **(currently amended):** A process for preparing butter milk and/or butter serum, which comprises:

subjecting raw cream to a first heat treatment at 85°C to 95°C,
preparing butter milk and/or butter serum, and
subjecting the butter milk and/or butter serum to a second heat treatment at 85°C to 130°C,

wherein a dissolved oxygen concentration of the raw cream, and/or the butter milk and/or butter serum is decreased to 8 ppm or less by addition of an inactive gas before the first heat treatment and/or the second heat treatment prior to decreasing the dissolved oxygen concentration of at least one selected from the group consisting of milk, a milk product, butter milk and butter serum, followed by heating, and optionally fractionizing the heated product.

2. **(currently amended):** The process according to claim 1, wherein the ~~dissolved oxygen concentration is decreased by~~ addition of inactive gas is not conducted before the first heat treatment.

3. **(currently amended):** The process according to claim 2, wherein the ~~inactive gas is nitrogen gas~~ addition of inactive gas is not conducted before the second heat treatment.

4. **(currently amended):** The process according to ~~any one of claims claim 1 to 3,~~ wherein the dissolved oxygen concentration of the raw cream and/or butter milk and/or butter serum is decreased to 2 to 8 ppm or less by the addition of the inactive gas.

5. **(currently amended):** The process according to ~~any one of claims claim 1 to 3,~~ wherein the dissolved oxygen concentration of the raw cream and/or butter milk and/or butter serum is decreased to 5 to 8 ppm or less by the addition of the inactive gas.

6. **(canceled).**

7. **(currently amended):** A process for preparing a butter milk-related dairy product and/or processed milk product, which comprises subjecting the butter milk and/or butter serum prepared by the process according to ~~any one of claims claim 1 to 3~~ to at least one processing selected from the group consisting of concentration, drying, fractionation, purification, deodorizing, decoloring and addition of an additive.

8. **(previously presented):** A process for preparing a milk product or processed milk product, which comprises adding at least one selected from the group consisting of the butter milk, the butter serum, the milk product and the processed milk product prepared by the process according to any one of claims 1 to 3 to another milk and/or milk product.

9. **(previously presented):** A process for preparing food or drink, which comprises using, as an addition material, at least one selected from the group consisting of the butter milk,

the butter serum, the milk product and the processed milk product prepared by the process according to any one of claims 1 to 3.

10. **(previously presented):** Butter milk, butter serum, a milk product, a processed milk product, food or drink, prepared by the process according to any one of claims 1 to 3.

11. **(new):** The process according to claim 1, further comprising a churning step.